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By Tony Leys

Congressman Bruce Braley led a delegation that visited Iowa National Guard troops at a Mississippi training base today.

The Iowa Democrat brought along 4,800 ears of Iowa sweet corn for the 2,800 Iowa soldiers. The troops are at Camp Shelby, training for service in Afghanistan, which is expected to start in late fall.

"The men and women of Iowa's National Guard, as well as their families, have made unbelievable sacrifices for our country," Braley said in a press release. "I wanted to personally thank all of them as they train for the largest deployment since World War II, and bringing a little taste of Iowa with me was the least I could do."

The project's supporters included the Iowa Farm Bureau. "We wish our troops well and are proud to provide them this 'flavor' of Iowa as a token of our gratitude for their hard work and difficult duties that they face," said Farm Bureau President Craig Lang.

Braley said the idea stemmed from a 2009 visit he made to Iraq with Congressman Gene Taylor of Mississippi. During that trip, Taylor arranged for thousands of pounds of gumbo and Gulf shrimp to be delivered to troops.

Besides the Farm Bureau, the project's supporters included several Iowa farmers and produce suppliers.